



## Federal Grant Helps Massachusetts Weather Storms

### Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

#### *Plymouth County, Massachusetts*

**Scituate, MA** - Since 1972, Scituate-resident Bill Montanari has refused to take a winter vacation for fear of flooding at his home on Jericho Road in Massachusetts. Every time a storm caused the water to rise, he spent the night on the couch anxiously watching the weather reports.



Jericho Road follows the coastline of Scituate Harbor with several residences and a salt water marsh on the side of the road opposite the harbor-front land. High-storm tides and intense coastal storm surges frequently left yards, driveways, and garages flooded with water.

During a storm in April 2007, his nervous feeling began to change. He rose from the couch at 1 a.m. to watch the high tide roll in. He anticipated water up to four feet would soon engulf his property. He slept restlessly on the couch for the remainder of the night wondering what damages this storm would bring.

Montanari joined his neighbors outside at 6 a.m. To their astonishment, the neighborhood was completely dry. Montanari called it "bone dry" and said he "couldn't believe it." The Jericho Road Drainage Project tested for the first time in this spring nor'easter was a success.

Completed in 2007, the Jericho Road Drainage Project in Scituate was funded primarily by a grant awarded through the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grants Program (HMGP). The HMGP assists states and local communities in implementing long-term hazard mitigation measures following a major disaster declaration. FEMA provides the grants to eligible states, tribes, or United States territories. The state then provides funding to local governments and eligible private non-profit organizations (sub-grantees) for projects.

The work at Jericho Road was a result of the 2001 winter storm season. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts had been awarded \$1.5 million for mitigation grants following severe storms in March 2001, and the Jericho Road Drainage Project was a sub-grant. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) co-administered the Commonwealth's grant program along with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Scott C. MacLeod, MEMA mitigation grants manager, recalled that more than 40 communities submitted project applications following the March 2001 storms. Of the applications, 16 hazard mitigation projects were approved. They included drainage and storm water management improvements, culvert upgrades, and hazard mitigation planning projects. "The Scituate Jericho Road drainage improvements were selected because of the repetitive nature of the flooding in the project area," said MacLeod.

To improve the drainage system under Jericho Road, a 12-inch pipe was replaced with an upgraded 42-inch pipe. The pipe now drains into two 30-inch concrete pipes before passing through the self-regulating tide gate at the outfall to Scituate Harbor. "Designed to minimize recurrent flood damage to public and private structures in the area, the project's tide gate also preserves and restores the delicate tidal wetlands" said MacLeod.

Scituate Department of Public Works Director Anthony Antoniello was pleased with the results of the project. Inspecting the Jericho Road project following the April 2007 storm, Antoniello described the scene. "The water went right down. It worked very well," he said, "Most people just don't know or appreciate what FEMA and MEMA have done for us."

Throughout the project's development, the town worked very closely with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, the Office of Coastal Zone Management, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Army Corps of Engineers to obtain the permits necessary to carry out the project.

FEMA provides extensive hazard mitigation expertise for every disaster, funding specific public mitigation projects and providing hazard mitigation grants to states following federally-declared disasters. Since 2001, Massachusetts has received two additional hazard mitigation grants as a result of federally declared flooding disasters in October 2005 and May 2006. "The grants enabled the Commonwealth to work with many communities to fund and implement cost-effective mitigation projects," MacLeod said.

From the April 2007 storm, flooding resulted in federal disaster declarations for all six New England states, including Massachusetts. MEMA officials are currently developing HMGP grant briefings in eligible communities in order to give those communities the opportunity to identify and seek funding for appropriate projects.

As for Bill Montanari of Scituate, this winter he plans to sleep more restfully and says he might even take a vacation.

#### Activity/Project Location

Geographical Area: **Single County in a State**

FEMA Region: **Region I**

State: **Massachusetts**

County: **Plymouth County**

#### Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Public**

Hazard Type: **Winter Storm**

Activity/Project Type: **Flood Control**

Activity/Project Start Date: **01/2007**

Activity/Project End Date: **08/2007**

Funding Source: **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)**

Funding Recipient: **Local Government**

Funding Recipient Name: **Town of Scituate**

#### Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **Amount Not Available**

#### Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal  
Disaster? **No**

Value Tested By Disaster? **Yes**

Tested By Federal Disaster #: **No Federal Disaster specified**

Year First Tested: **2007**

Repetitive Loss Property? **Yes**

## Reference URLs

Reference URL 1: <http://www.town.scituate.ma.us>

Reference URL 2: <http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/hmgrp/index.shtm>

## Main Points

- High-storm tides and intense coastal storm surges frequently left yards, driveways, and garages of residents on Jericho Road flooded with water from the Scituate Harbor.
- The Jericho Road Drainage Project in Scituate was funded primarily by a grant awarded through the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grants Program (HMGP).
- 16 hazard mitigation projects were approved, which included drainage and storm water management improvements, culvert upgrades, and hazard mitigation planning projects.
- To improve the drainage system under Jericho Road, a 12-inch pipe was replaced with an upgraded 42-inch pipe.
- The project was successfully completed in 2007 and the residents have not experienced any flooding since the completion of the project.



Jericho Beach Residences



Tide Gate Open



Tide Gate Closed